

XXXVI.—Recent Ornithological Publications.

1. ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS.

WE have little to speak of under the head of English books relating to Ornithology since we last addressed our readers. The volume of the Zoological Society's 'Proceedings' for the past year (1859), with illustrations, has been issued. Nine of the 48 plates represent birds. The first part of the 'Proceedings' for the present year is likewise published, and contains many papers on Ornithology. Mr. Bree's 'Birds of Europe not observed in the British Isles' has reached its twenty-fourth number, the parts appearing with very commendable regularity.

The fifth number of vol. xxviii. of the 'Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal' contains an "Itinerary, with Memoranda, chiefly Topographical and Zoological, through the Southerly portion of the District of Amherst, Province of Tenasserim," by Major Tickell. There are several ornithological notices of interest in this paper. On the Atlaran River (Jan. 31st), "a range of perpendicular rocks of mural limestone rise sheer out of the water to six or eight hundred feet, on the right bank of the river, and some extraordinary, bold-scarped, insulated rocks are scattered also along the opposite side. On the pinnacles of these rocks we observed numbers of Adjutants. These large birds breed here annually, and the rocks are in many places conspicuously white with their dung. There are two species of Adjutant, *Leptoptilus argala* (our old Calcutta friend), and *L. javanicus* (a rarer visitor in Bengal), and both breed together in these inaccessible places. The Argala is noticeably larger than the other; but the eggs of the two species are hardly to be distinguished apart." An Appendix to this paper contains descriptions of some birds supposed to be new, procured during the journey; but as all the species have been previously named by Mr. Blyth in his 'Report' published in the previous number of the same Journal, it would have been better not to have given Major Tickell's manuscript names, which are merely useless synonyms.

2. FRENCH PUBLICATIONS.

The numbers of the 'Revue et Magasin de Zoologie' for this year, received since our last issue, contain several articles relating to Birds. M. C. F. Dubois writes 'Notes nido-ologiques,' on *Procnias cærulea*, *Turdus rufiventris*, and *Ampelis garrula*. There is more novelty in his account of the two first than in that of the last, the nest of which, he says, was first discovered by "un Anglais, du nom de John Wolley"! In No. 4, M. Loche describes two *new* species of Larks, discovered by himself in the Algerian Sahara. *Calandrella reboudia*, the first of these, has already been characterized by Mr. Tristram under M. Loche's manuscript name (*Ibis*, vol. i. pp. 58 and 422). In the second instance, M. Loche's name, *Galerida randonii*, must give way to Mr. Tristram's *Galerida macrorhyncha*, which is the more fair, as Mr. Tristram "first drew" Captain Loche's "attention to the bird as new, and supplied him with specimens in 1857*."

Dr. J. E. Cornay has published (Paris, Labé, 1860, 20 pp.) an elaborate "Mémoire sur les causes de la coloration des œufs des Oiseaux et des parties organiques végétales et animales."

M. O. Des Murs' general work on Oology* is now ready, and we propose to give a notice of it in our next Number.

3. GERMAN, DUTCH, AND SCANDINAVIAN PUBLICATIONS.

We have received, through the polite attention of Herr Oberamtman Ferdinand Heine, of Halberstadt, an early copy of the second part of 'Museum Heineanum'—a list of the valuable and extensive ornithological collection possessed by this gentleman. It contains an account of the species of Insectorial birds belonging to the division *Clamatores* of Dr. Cabanis' arrangement, and has been prepared by the last-named gentleman in conjunction with Ferdinand Heine, the son of the proprietor of the collection. The volume is one of great interest to all students

* Tristram in 'Ibis,' vol. i. p. 427.

† Traité général d'Oologie ornithologique, au point de vue de la Classification. Par O. Des Murs. Paris, 1860. 1 vol. 8vo.

of exotic Ornithology, and has been long anxiously expected by us. We do not agree with the authors in the principles of zoological nomenclature which they have adopted, either as regards the rejection of names not classically derived, or the excessive multiplication of generic divisions. But we do not complain of their employment of these principles; for, the fact is, there is a great deal to be said on both sides of these important questions. With the general arrangement of the families and genera, as set forth in this work, we have the satisfaction of expressing our very decided approval. Several years' study of the difficult and complicated forms of the birds belonging to the families *Formicariidæ*, *Pteroptochidæ*, *Anabatidæ*, *Tyrannidæ*, and *Cotingidæ*, has convinced us that these groups cannot be sundered in any natural system, and that they must be placed together in a series apart from the more typical *Insesores*. We notice also with pleasure that accurate *Latin* diagnoses have been attached to the new species described in this part of the list, and that great pains have been taken with the synonymy. The families adopted by the authors for the arrangement of the *Clamatores* are as follows:—

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| 1. <i>Hypocnemididæ</i> . | 8. <i>Prionitidæ</i> . |
| 2. <i>Eriodoridæ</i> . | 9. <i>Coraciidæ</i> . |
| 3. <i>Pteroptochidæ</i> . | 10. <i>Upupidæ</i> . |
| 4. <i>Anabatidæ</i> . | 11. <i>Meropidæ</i> . |
| 5. <i>Tyrannidæ</i> . | 12. <i>Alcedinidæ</i> . |
| 6. <i>Ampelidæ</i> . | 13. <i>Bucerotidæ</i> . |
| 7. <i>Phytotomidæ</i> . | |
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Of Cabanis' 'Journal für Ornithologie' (with which 'Naumannia' has become incorporated from the beginning of the present year—the new series being under the joint editorship of Dr. J. Cabanis and Dr. E. Baldamus), we have received parts iv. and v. for last year. There are several articles in these numbers that will well repay perusal, such as the continuation of Dr. H. Bernstein's notes upon the nidification of Javan birds, Dr. J. Gundlach's ornithological letters from Cuba, and Von Gonzenbach's "excursions" from Smyrna to the breeding-places of the *Laridæ*, &c., besides the more strictly scientific papers of Dr.

Hartlaub, F. Heine, and others. Dr. J. Gundlach's account (p. 297) of the nidification of the Cuban Palm-Swift (*Tachornis iradii*) (which he maintains is different from *T. phœnicobia*, Gosse, of Jamaica) is curious, and agrees with Mr. Gosse's accurate notes on the Jamaican species in his 'Birds of Jamaica' (p. 58). Does it not go to show the relationship of the *Cypselidæ* to the *Trochilidæ*?

Of the new series of the 'Journal' edited by Dr. J. Cabanis and Dr. E. Baldamus, we have seen the first number for the present year. It commences with the first portion of an elaborate article by Dr. G. Hartlaub, of Bremen, on the Birds of Madagascar. From this wonderful island, which it seems almost justifiable to consider, with I. G. St. Hilaire, as a zoological region of itself, though it is preferable to class it as an abode of exaggerated* *Æthiopian* forms, 156 species of birds are now known to Dr. Hartlaub, of which no less than 89 are, as far as is hitherto known, peculiar to the island†. Of generic forms not less than 25 are purely Madagascarian—a still greater test, perhaps, of the eccentricity of its fauna. There are likewise some contributions to our knowledge of the Great Auk (*Alca impennis*), a subject which is now attracting much attention, in the present Number, and other articles, one of which will be recognized as familiar in an English dress to most of our readers.

The Annual of the Zoological Society 'Natura Artis Magistra' of Amsterdam for the present year contains an article by Professor Schlegel "over eenige in Nederland waargenomen vremde Vogelsoorten" (upon some foreign species of birds taken in Holland), in which some account is given of a pair of *Syrhaptès paradoxus*, observed in the Dunes near Zandvoort, at the end of August last. One of them was shot in the beginning of October, as we have already stated‡, and the specimen is now in the collection of the Society at Amsterdam.

* Confer Journ. Proc. Linn. Soc. (Zool.) ii. p. 139.

† In the *Mammalia* the proportion is still greater—out of 50 species inhabiting Madagascar, only one or two being likewise met with on the mainland.

‡ Ibis, 1860, p. 109.

Professor Schlegel has also sent us the first part of a new popular work* on the Zoology of Holland, of which he has undertaken to write the portions relating to the Vertebrata.

The Proceedings† of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences for the present year contain a paper by Professor J. Reinhardt of Copenhagen on the nidification of the Anis (*Crotophaga*), in which he has carefully collected extracts from the different authors who have written on this subject. The Professor considers that there exist but three species of the genus, viz. *Crotophaga ani*, *major*, and *sulcirostris*,—an opinion, we may mention, which exactly agrees with our own views on this point. Professor J. Reinhardt has also published some remarks‡ on the question whether *Picus tridactylus* is to be considered a Danish bird, in which he takes to task Dr. Kjaerbølling's somewhat loose statements on this point, and notices several discrepancies which exist between the assertions made in the latter's "Danmarks Fugle," and the accounts of the same occurrences given by the same author in 'Naumannia.'

IV. AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

The 'Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia,' of which we have received up to p. 80 for the present year, contain some notes on the habits of the Mexican Humming-birds (*Campylopterus delatirii*, p. 47, and *Cyanomyia cyanocephala*, p. 80), by Rafael Montes de Oca. We have also to thank Prof. Baird and Mr. Cassin for separate copies of the first portion of the latter gentleman's catalogue of the birds collected during the United States' expedition for survey of the Isthmus of Darien. The locality is interesting and hitherto unexplored. A new Puff-bird (*Monasa pallescens*), and the recently described Toucan (*Selenidera spectabilis*) and *Calliste (C. lavinia)* are among the most noticeable novelties. Mr. Cassin's *Ortho-*

* De Dieren van Nederland. Gewervelde Dieren door Prof. H. Schlegel. Haarlem, 1860, 8vo.

† Oversigt over det Kgl. Vidensk. Selsk. Forhandlingar o. s. v. 1860.

‡ "En Bemærkning om det Berettegelse, hvormed *Picus tridactylus* er anført i Fortegnelsen paa de i Danmark trufne Fugle."

gonys olivaceus is evidently a species of *Vireolanius*. We may also remark that *Lipaugus unirufus* is a very different bird from Lafresnaye's *Querula fuscocinerea*. Mr. Salvin has recently brought numerous specimens of the former bird from Coban, Vera Paz : the latter is from New Granada.

XXXVII.—*Letters, Extracts from Correspondence, Notices, &c.*

M. O. DES MURS has written us the following letter in reply to our remarks on the egg of *Balaniceps* (*anteà*, p. 188), and on his proposal to associate *Passer* with the *Ploceinæ*.

“Paris, 4 Mai, 1860.

“MON CHER MONSIEUR,—Décidément, je compte, dans le nombre de vos savans ou studieux correspondants, je ne dirai pas un ennemi, mais un collègue en ornithologie, qui se montre animé envers moi de tout autre sentiment que celui de la bienveillance.

“Je trouve encore, dans votre intéressant ‘Ibis’ d’Avril, un article qui en est la preuve, et qui, si je l’ai bien compris, s’exprime, entr’autres choses, en ces termes, au sujet de ma description de l’œuf du *Balaniceps* :—‘. . . et certainement, il ne pond pas des œufs *tachetés*, comme M. Des Murs s’avance INGÉNUMENT!’—‘and certainly does not lay *spotted* eggs, as M. Des Murs himself CANDIDLY allows!’

“Or, mon cher Directeur, rien n’est plus inexact, en tout point, que ce que me fait dire *si obligeamment* votre correspondant, pour se donner sans doute le plaisir de me mettre en défaut, de l’autre côté du Détroit.

“Il me suffira de reproduire *tout nettement* ce que j’ai dit, et ce que je maintiens, quant à la description de l’œuf du *Balaniceps* de ma collection :—

“Il est de forme ovée plus ou moins allongée, mesurant de 8½ à 9 centimètres de grand diamètre, sur 6 centimètres de petit diamètre. Sa coquille est d’un blanc légèrement azure, ce ton acquérant plus d’intensité dans la transparence du test ; la cristallisation en paraît assez fine et homogène, mais *laisse apercevoir des PORES passablement indiqués par des espèces de*